

INTERVIEW OF  
THE HONORABLE HENRY A. KISSINGER  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
BY MANUEL BECERRA ACOSTA,  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, EXCELSIOR  
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS ROOM  
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Q Do you think, Mr. Secretary, that the world order is going to continue the way it has been -- in a way, run by the great powers?

A Well, it isn't today really run by the great powers. In some of their military problems it may be run by the great powers. In many political decisions it isn't run by the great powers; and in many economic conditions and situations it isn't run at all by the great powers -- if you think what the oil producing countries are doing to the industrialized countries.

So I think, in any event, that other countries are going to come up and that the present great powers will decline in relative influence.

Q What role is going to be played by Latin America in the Third World in this new scheme of things?

A Well, Latin America is in a very special position because on the one hand, it is related to the United States, and on the other hand it is related to the Third World -- so it can perform a very useful function as a bridge between some of the new countries and some of the older, industrialized countries.

Our view, of course, is that we should strengthen the community in the Western Hemisphere without impairing the possibility of a Latin America to play its own specific role -- and I think Latin America can be a good example, and a moderating influence and an inspiration to many parts of the Third World.

Q Would that be the way of development?

A The way of development, the way of political evolution, and the way of dealing with great powers, -- about which you have fewer complexes than some of the other countries.

Q Considering the fact that there are so many poor countries in Asia, Africa and also in Latin America, do you think that there will be a political unity among all those countries?

A Probably not, because they are divided by many different political conceptions -- but there will always be unit sympathy.

Q I see.

I have read your book with the Third World, and your --

A That's more than I can say. "

Q -- and pointing out the way the great powers could maintain --

A -- I wrote it, but I never read things of mine after they are printed --

I cannot, frankly, I cannot bear reading what I have written. It's a curious thing -- I write about twenty drafts, but then I don't look at it anymore.

Q What do the great powers do to maintain peace in the world?

A What can the great powers do? They have to show military restraint. They must not use their military strength to achieve their objectives. They have to come to some understanding about political objectives -- and they must try to settle disputes on the basis of justice rather than on the basis of force.

Q I feel that the military, generally, and the economic power are obstacles that stand in the way to peace. How can there be peace unless there is disarmament on the one hand, and economic justice on the other?

A Well of course, as you know, I strongly -- I'm a strong advocate of disarmament. I was instrumental in the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement in 1972, and we are working out now a similar agreement for 1974, when the President goes to Moscow.

Economic justice, we are in favor of. I think the recent events have shown that it applies on both sides -- it should apply to the weak as well as to the strong.

Q There is one point that I do want to stress, that as long as the big and powerful countries are not doing anything very substantial to help the poor masses of the world, I don't think that there can be effective peace -- at least in the immediate future.

A Well I think one should separate the two problems:

One is, I don't think the threat of war is produced by the poor people.

Q Oh, I see.

A The threat of war is usually produced by the rich people because the poor people can't afford armaments.

But I don't think there can be a sense of justice unless the rich countries help the poor countries.

Now in this country, we are making a big effort to see that we can maintain the levels of economic aid but we have a major domestic problem because in the light of all the things that have happened, our Congress is getting very reluctant to pass legislation, and this, frankly, is why I am taking such a large Congressional Delegation to Mexico.

Q Yes.

A To make sure if we agree on something, the Congress will vote on it.

Q But aren't the poor masses sort of a threat to the rich countries, considering what you have said about the production of wealth?

A We must help the poor masses -- not because they are a threat, but because it's the right thing to do.

Q Because it's the right thing to do -- but not a duty.

A It is a duty, a moral duty --

Q In order to get the peace.

Q No, It is a moral duty. I won't relate

it so much to the question of peace, but it's a duty, anyway.

Q You don't -- there are advantages prevailing in Asia -- particularly in Peking. Isn't that some sort of a threat to world peace?

Q Not, probably, [for] the Soviets.

A What is going on in China?

Q The ideology prevailing in China, does it constitute some sort of a potential threat to peace?

A Well so far, China has been very restrained as far as their policy in recent years, and we have a good relationship with the Peoples Republic --

Q But now, China is beginning to open out and go out into the world and establishing embassies throughout the world -- including Latin America.

A I think Latin American can take care of itself.

Q But the -- the peace of --

A Well, as long as China continues the foreign policy it is now conducting, it is not a threat to the peace. We don't know what could happen in five years.

Q Yes.

A I must, unfortunately, leave here.

Q Just one more question, if you please.

What can Latin America expect from the United States?

A Well, I am going down to put before my colleagues, a serious program of the new relationship between Latin America and the United States.

I won't promise anything that we can't deliver, and I cannot -- there are some areas in which I cannot be too specific but in which I will indicate in which direction we can go -- and I think what you -- the major thing I can tell you is: I am going to Mexico in order to see whether we can get a new relationship that will last for many years.

Q At present the unfortunate aspect of Latin America is that in the continent of America, these United States, facing on the south -- facing --

A Well, I don't think we should look at it as a confrontation between Latin America and the United States I think we should deal together, with those problems where we agree -- and where we disagree, to deal with them as well as possible, to try to solve them

Latin America and the United States.

Q All right, Thank you very much.

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